

A STALEMATE!

Tooting & Mitcham 0, Wycombe Wanderers 0

IT WAS stalemate Saturday everywhere in the Isthmian League—not least of all at Sandy Lane, where Wycombe and Tooting reached utter deadlock long before full time.

While Wanderers were dropping—or perhaps gaining—a valuable away point, 'mad' August bowed out on some of its most ludicrous notes yet.

Enfield held 1-1 at League whipping-boy's, Bromley; Sutton held likewise, only at home, by improving Clapton; Wealdstone crashing 3-1 to Dulwich Hamlet at Champion Hill; no more really need be said.

Except that with Barking taking a half share at Oxford City in a goalless draw, and Leytonstone sending bottom club, Corinthian Casuals away defeated, albeit by the only goal, the position now is a four-way tie on ten points, involving (in goal-average order) Sutton, Wycombe, Leytonstone and Oxford.

That Clapton lie only two points in arrears and yet can claim no better than 11th place is some indication of how close the opening gambits to the campaign have been.

Similarly the blank score-line tells (almost) all about Wanderers' visit to much-improved Tooting.

Almost, because there was enough entertaining football to have warranted the occasional goal apiece.

The match was persistently hampered by a missing control in mid-field. Not surprisingly,

Tooting deadlock and four lie top after 'mad' month for the Isthmians

By

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therefore, defences dominated, with either attack robbed of much of its impetus.

Wycombe hit snags before kick off, when Len Worley missed his connection with the team coach and arrived only after Viv Busby had been offered an opportunity to redeem himself for two poor performances earlier in the month.

It is quite clear that Busby's performance tends toward the role of roving wingman, rather like that of Geoff Anthony on the left.

Two such strikers, as opposed to the one "rover" and other "Worley-like" flank-man ready to float over a

stream of crosses inside, might add an extra touch of penetration.

But he chose the wrong day, the wrong type of game, to make any lasting impression or claim to Worley's regular place.

Tooting's Ken Jelly gave more trouble than any other forward on the field, and kept Wycombe's backs, and John Maskell in particular, alert.

Attacking link-man, Bob Hatt, along with Anthony, menaced Tooting in retaliation but by half time the writing was on the wall.

Indeed the second period meandered along as a formality, to complete a fair points share-out.

Tooting put Ken Holder on as substitute for right half Burke in the 72nd minute, followed three minutes later by Wanderers, who introduced Keith Samuels for Busby.

Seconds from time, Maskell

leaped into a free-flying corner kick, dropped it again, then parried a close range shot bravely, and the deadlock was secured . . . and there's little to suggest that Tooting's trial at Loakes Park could be destined for any different fate.

Tooting: N. Stanley; B. Feeney, K. Baker; D. Burke (sub: K. Holder 72nd minute) M. Pardey, P. Webb; P. Sansbury, K. Jelly, D. Hutchins, W. Smith, B. Kelly.

Wycombe: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, L. Temel; J. Lailey, J. Delaney, K. Ward; V. Busby (sub: K. Samuels 75th minute) B. Baker, A. Horseman, R. Hatt, G. Anthony.